

Water-Based Recreation

Corps of Engineers Facility and Services
Customer Discussion Guide
Format, Procedures, and Description of Data Fields

CE Water-Based Recreation CUSTOMER DISCUSSION GUIDE	No: _____	Date: _____	Time: _____	Weekday _____ Weekend _____	
		Project: _____		Area: _____	
Access: Launch ramp user _____		Marina Boat Rental _____		Marina Slip Renter _____	Private Dock _____
• Equipment		Houseboat Pontoon Fishing Boat Runabout Jet-Ski Other _____			
WHO:					
• Major water-based rec. activities		Swim Water Ski Boat Jet-ski Sightsee Fish Other _____			
• Project(s) visited					
• Frequency of use		First Visit Holiday Use: All major holidays Memorial Day 4 th of July Labor Day Non-Holiday Use: 1-3 visits/year 4-10 visits/year More than 10 visits/year			
• Group type		Single Family Friends Family & Friends Multi-Family Other _____			
• Local resident		Yes No			
• Shoreline resident		Yes No			
• First-time visitor		Yes No			
• Only use CE projects?		Yes No			
• Ethnicity		White Hispanic Black Asian/Pacific Native American Other			
WHAT:					
<i>Observations by the customers on:</i>					
• Lake experience					
• Needed improvements					
• Problem areas					
• Concerns					
• Additional facilities/services needed					
• Things we do that are not needed					
WHY:					
• Reason customer selected <i>this</i> lake today					
• How boating on this lake compares to other lakes they visit					
OTHER:					
• Additional comments					

Customer Outreach - CE Water-Based Recreation Customer Discussion Guide

Procedures and Description of Data Fields

PROCEDURES: Following are recommended procedures for customer contacts using the Customer Discussion Guide.

1. Give customers advance notice: Customers need a heads up to be thinking along the lines of the Customer Discussion Guide topics. Flyers can be placed on bulletin boards. Particularly for lake access adjacent to camping areas, you may have contract gate attendant distribute a card to incoming campers a day or so before sampling the area, with wording such as:

<p style="text-align: center;">Tell us about your time on the water</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*Good things *Problems *Things we could improve</p> <p style="text-align: center;">We want to hear from you!</p> <p>We want to hear about your boating experiences on our lake. A Corps of Engineers representative will be in the area to talk to boaters on May 31st between 2 – 4 p.m, to get their feedback on their experience on the lake. Please be thinking about comments you can give if you are selected for an interview.</p> <p>If you do not get to talk directly to the Corps representative you can still give us your ideas by jotting them down on this card and returning it to the Park Attendant before you leave.</p> <p>Thank you for your help.</p>

2. Sample selection: Consider using a random method to select customers to be interviewed; for instance, to select every 3rd boater leaving a certain ramp. This is not to imply statistical significance for the results, but works well to get a good distribution across the recreation area. Customers also readily accept the answer that they were randomly selected when they ask, "Why did you pick me?" and those who ask, "Why didn't you pick me?"

3. Initiating customer contact: An example of a simple script to start the conversation:

"Hello, my name is _____. I'm with the Corps of Engineers _____office. We want to make sure we have satisfied customers, and we're talking to a random sample of customers

September 2005

today to get ideas on what we should do (or not do) to meet your needs."

4. Recording results: Not every group or individual will give information to match each of the blocks on the format. Try to steer the discussion to get information, but depend on a conversational approach rather than a stream of direct questions. It may be most productive to record information after leaving the customer(s), since otherwise they may become distracted or uncomfortable wondering what is being written down, and not give as much detail.

DEFINITIONS: The following definitions are provided to assist in recording the results of customer interviews on the Customer Profile format.

No.: Customer Discussion Guide reference number. For each project begin with 1 and number consecutively.

Date: Date of interview

Time: Time interview begins

Weekday/Weekend: Designate if interview occurs on weekday or weekend day

Project: Project name

Area: Name of the recreation area where interview occurs

Access: Check whether using launch ramp, marina rental boat, keeps boat in a marina slip, or has a private dock

Equipment: Circle which type of vessel they use. Below are some examples to assist with determination of equipment type:



Pontoon



Runabout



Fishing Boat

WHO:

Major Rec. Activities: From the choices provided on the format, circle all the major water-based activities in which the customers indicate they participate at the project.

Project(s) Visited: Write in names of other Corps projects that the customers use.

Frequency of Use: Circle the choices that describe the customers' frequency of use for both holidays and non-holidays.

Group Type: From the choices given on the format, circle the description of the group.

Local Resident: Prior to beginning interviews, the definition of "local" for this project needs to be determined by project personnel. On the format, indicate by circling "yes" or "no" if the customer meets that criterion.

Shoreline Resident: On the format, indicate by circling "yes" or "no" if the customer is a shoreline resident.

First-time visitor: On the format, indicate by circling "yes" or "no" if the customer is a first-time visitor to the project.

Only use CE projects: On the format, indicate by circling "yes" or "no" if the customer uses Corps projects exclusively for their major recreation activities.

Ethnicity: From the choices given on the format, circle the ethnicity of the customer(s) being interviewed based on visual observation.

WHAT, WHY, and OTHER:

Observations by the Customers on: In the blocks provided, note customer comments on the various topics listed.